

### **HLTH AGE 2GG3 Essay Assignment**

This assignment asks students to respond to a question of on the topic of mental health and society. In a maximum of 1500 words, using a 12 point font and 1.5 spacing, please answer ONE of the following questions. You are required to meaningfully make use of (and properly cite) at least SIX peer-reviewed academic sources. Please ensure that you write in complete sentences and paragraphs.

Further notes: The assignment should be submitted as a Word file or PDF to the dropbox on Avenue to Learn by 11:59pm of the due date (SEE THE SYLLABUS FOR DETAILS ON THE OPTIONAL EXTENSION).

Please be sure to use APA-style parenthetical referencing and a properly formatted bibliography. You do not need to include an abstract or running header. Details on APA citations and bibliographic entries can be found here:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/in\\_text\\_citations\\_the\\_basics.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations_the_basics.html)

Choose ONE of the following questions:

- i) During his presidency, several psychiatrists publicly suggested that Donald Trump might be suffering from mental illness, potentially providing the grounds for impeachment (while others of course disagreed). After he launched the invasion of Ukraine, many political commentators similarly began to public suggest that Vladimir Putin was mentally ill. How can we understand this trend of public diagnosis? What purposes motivate such public diagnoses?
- ii) Historians have spent a significant amount of time debating the reasons for the failure of the moral treatment movement. Is it fair to see moral treatment's story as a failure? If so, why did the movement fail?
- iii) In light of long wait times and accessibility issues, some reformers have suggested that religious authorities (such as priests, imams, pastors, rabbis, and so on) be entrusted with some forms of mental health care. Should insurance companies (whether private or public, like OHIP) cover such services? Why or why not?
- iv) How successful has the consumer/survivor movement been in changing the status and protecting the rights of individuals diagnosed with mental illness?
- v) In 2016, the University of Toronto's decision to establish the Bonnie Burstow Scholarship in Antipsychiatry was met with a mixture of appreciation and disbelief within the mental healthcare community. Should UofT offer such a scholarship? Why or why not?

vi) In recent years, many mental healthcare professionals, especially psychotherapists, have seen their work “manualized,” meaning that they are encouraged to follow instructional manuals as they carry out their work. There has been a significant amount of resistance against this trend. Why are so many psychotherapists reluctant to embrace manualization?

vii) Increasingly, some physicians are engaging in the practice of “social prescription.” Other advocates have pushed for universal basic income (UBI) as a solution to the mental health crisis. What accounts for these trends? How likely are they to find wider support within the psychiatric community?

viii) While universities have spent significant sums investing in various forms of mental healthcare and support, why might some critics suggest that such initiatives are bound to fail?

As discussed in the *Grading Manifesto* (posted on Avenue), the assignment will be graded on overall quality rather than a precisely defined rubric. We are interested in how well students understand the material as well how effectively they communicate it. That means we are evaluating (a) how well students construct a compelling answer to the question, (b) the extent to which they demonstrate mastery of the material, (c) the structure and organization of the writing, (d) the quality of the evidence that they draw upon to make their argument, (f) professionalism, and (g) the clarity and quality of the writing itself.

In terms of sources, there are many potential places that students can look. Beyond searching for books in the library (many of which are now online), students can also access McMaster’s article databases: ([https://library.mcmaster.ca/articles\\_azlist/all](https://library.mcmaster.ca/articles_azlist/all)). These databases are far more focused than Google Scholar and will likely turn up better results.

Although each specific topic will likely benefit from the use of different databases, some of the better ones include: Anthropology Abstracts America: History and Life, Academic OneFile, Anthropology Plus, Arts & Humanities Citation Index (Web of Science), Historical Abstracts, JSTOR, Social Sciences Abstracts, Scholars Portal, and Sociological Abstracts. You might also investigate PsycInfo, Google Scholar, and PubMed. More information can be found here: <https://library.mcmaster.ca/guides/>

Although strictly medical sources might be useful for this paper, there is a good chance that you’ll get much more from taking an interdisciplinary approach to your literature search. Thus, we strongly encourage you to make use of the types of databases listed above.